



Annual Report

2020

Table of Contents

1.	SchoolNet’s Work	1
2.	SchoolNet Projects.....	2
2.1.	Commonwealth of Learning.....	2
2.1.1	CDELTA.....	2
2.1.2	COL - Teacher Futures.....	2
2.1.3	COL- Women and Girls.....	2
2.2	Telkom.....	3
2.2.1	Connected Schools Project	3
2.2.2.	Telkom- DoC Cyber labs	3
2.3	Microsoft.....	3
2.3.1	SACE Endorsement	3
2.3.2	MS Teams WCED.....	4
2.3.3	MS Teams EC.....	4
2.4	Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education	4
2.5	NASCEE	5
2.6	DGMT	5
2.7	PROTEC.....	6
3	Advocacy and New Work/Partnerships.....	6
4	Staff.....	6
5.	The Short Term Future	7
	Finance Report	8

1. SchoolNet's Work

The COVID-19 Lockdown measures imposed within South Africa resulted in the SchoolNet offices closing at the end of March 2020 and officially re-opening in September 2020. Like us, many organisations experienced challenges, however through quick thinking, and adjustments we were able to use the challenges to our advantage. The six months of office closure allowed SchoolNet to consolidate its systems, processes, and training services.

At the time SchoolNet was placed in a predicament, as we had the Telkom, Commonwealth of Learning, and Google projects as secured funding with a range of training deadlines to meet. We had to devise a plan of action to ensure that projects could continue using digital means. This move to virtual training meant that administrative staff had to learn new skills to complete training logistics using digital platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, and Zoom, and senior staff had to look at firming up their facilitation skills to ensure that projects were completed according to our implementation plan without the need for outsourcing to external trainers. As the Board is aware, SchoolNet lacks educational capacity with two staff currently being qualified in Education, however we have recognised that additional staff have gained tacit knowledge through working the sector for more than a decade. All staff had to undergo professional development sessions to ensure they were equipped for the task at hand and this included mentorship and coaching by the ED, attendance of online tutorials and completion of online courses to demonstrate competence.

The Executive Director (ED) fulfilled the role of lead facilitator and curriculum head during this time to ensure that Project implementation continued without issue. As a result, a range of new courses were developed, and endorsed by SACE. Several training and feedback sessions ensured that strategic staff namely, Mathapelo, Hlengiwe and Quintres were able to facilitate the sessions as required by the various projects. Once Mathapelo, Hlengiwe and Quintres were able to display independence, they were then tasked with guiding and supporting the Specialists and Admin staff to setup online training logistics using virtual means and managing attendance using the same.

The ED then focused efforts on securing additional funding. Although virtual environments are not typically how we source funding, we were successful in securing funding from new partners such as ISPA, NPI Consulting, and DGMT. Whilst these proved to be short term projects, they did have a hand in reducing the deficit in finances along with the use of internal staff to facilitate sessions rather than outsourcing.

In 2021, we have had additional success with funding through Telkom, COL Women and Girls, Google Skills for Africa Partnership, and Microsoft.

2. SchoolNet Projects

2.1. Commonwealth of Learning

2.1.1 CDELTA

The focus of this professional development initiative was to build capacity and grow digital education leaders using the Commonwealth Digital Education Leadership Training in Action (C-DELTA) course. The course includes a range of topics that focus on Developing Digital Identities, Mobilising Resources, Engaging Networks, Enhancing Access, making informed decisions, Capacity Building and Cultivating Innovation. SchoolNet proposed to test three models of implementation namely, face to face facilitation, Master training and online workshops. Due to COVID-19 we had to amend our project plan to facilitate more online sessions and we were able to successfully complete the project by September 2020.

In 2021, phase three of CDELTA was secured with the focus on Master training and implementation of 50 training workshops focusing on digital leadership for Teachers and Students.

2.1.2 COL - Teacher Futures

In 2018-2019, SchoolNet SA was requested to provide training and support to the academic staff at the University of Fort Hare, school leaders and in-service teachers in the School-Based Teacher Development programme. In phase two of this project, we were requested to provide a phase 2 of the project to support school-based implementation. This project was halted as the University of Fort Hare did not present audited statements and therefore did not receive their final balance payment. This had a knock-on effect on our involvement as UFH owed SchoolNet just under R 60 000 for work completed in 2019.

The implementation of Phase 2 activities has been delayed due to UFH being unable to complete their audit report due to being under administration. We have since had consultative meetings with COL and UFH and we are hopeful that this will be resolved when the UFH audited statements are provided to COL.

2.1.3 COL- Women and Girls

This project started in March 2021 and is focused on supporting 180 women and girls to improve their digital literacy skills, first-line maintenance, computational thinking, and coding as well as essential skills such as Building Confidence, Being safe online, etc. If we are successful with the implementation of this programme, the COL Women and Girls programme will be extended to a five-year programme.

2.2 Telkom

2.2.1 Connected Schools Project

The Telkom Connected schools project was extended for the 4th year until June 2021. This extension was for Teacher Development in the seven Ga-Rankuwa schools, Zwide schools as wandell as the contracting of the Telkom Interns.

This project continues to grow SchoolNet as we test our approaches to find ways to measure impact. We have devised several instruments for collating attendance, assessing mastery of skills through portfolios of evidence, and classroom visits designed to provide feedback and support the integration of ICTs for digital learning. In year one we started with 150 teachers, in year two added a further 55 teachers and by year 3 we are working with just over three hundred teachers in the seven project schools and just under 3000 learners. Our focus is on Teacher professional development and dual certifications for learners.

2.2.2. Telkom- DoC Cyber labs

The Department of Communications, now renamed Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (DCDT), in partnership with Telkom Foundation, launched Cyber labs in two schools in Umtata and Ntabankulu. SchoolNet was appointed to provide teacher professional development for teachers and to support champion teachers to provide additional programmes for the communities around the two schools.



2.3 Microsoft

2.3.1 SACE Endorsement

Microsoft has developed a Student Teacher Education Programme which seeks to provide support to initial teacher educators at Higher Education Institutions to empower them in a range of ICT programmes to prepare them for 21st Century classroom engagement when they qualify as teachers. SchoolNet was asked to submit the 20 courses for SACE endorsement which was successfully completed in June 2020.

2.3.2 MS Teams WCED

The COVID-19 Pandemic surfaced a number of challenges in the South African education system, with the majority of public sector schools cited as not being adequately prepared for digital learning or blended learning opportunities. Many provinces, including the Western Cape Education Department sought ways to partner with organisations such as Microsoft for assistance to optimise digital and/blended learning. The Western Cape Province wanted to expand its online offering through Microsoft funding. SchoolNet was approached to implement a Province-wide teacher development programme of 18 workshops in March 2021. The development programme focused on introducing teachers to the Microsoft in Education expert programme and how they could be part of the Global Learning Community, a focused effort on using new Microsoft O365 tools, such as Breakout rooms, Assessments for Learning and using OneNote for Inclusive Education. A total of 2741 participants with unique identifiers attended the 18 workshops with a total of 1069 institutions included in this initiative.

2.3.3 MS Teams EC

Much like the Western Cape, the Eastern Cape too had wanted to provide Teacher Development through Microsoft initiatives, and contracted SchoolNet to implement a province-wide initiative for educators in the Province. The selected programme was a series of four workshops which were repeated weekly on different days and at different times, to allow teachers to connect to sessions when they were free in the month of March.

Plagued by connectivity issues as well as poor selection of timing of the workshops on the part of the ECDoE resulted in many teachers indicating frustration at not being able to attend sessions as it conflicted with public transport or lift club schedules. Despite the challenges, 1162 educators connected to the sessions. We know that this number is more as many schools that could, hosted watch parties with teachers gathering around one device.

2.4 Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education contracted SchoolNet SA to provide a professional development programme for twenty-seven teachers at Ithongasi Primary School and eleven teachers Nsimbini Secondary School on the Integration of ICT in Curriculum. The selected course was Using Digital Resources in the Classroom and was facilitated in February 2021.

Using Digital Resources in the Classroom professional development programme provided a foundation for the Integration of ICT within the curriculum across all subjects associated with the respective GET and FET bands at each school to support teaching and learning in the classroom. A special focus of this training was to include the practical use of the technologies

that have already been provided to schools. These practical, pedagogically-focused workshops ensured that teachers gain insight into the value of digital resources and use the tools in ways that they will be able to replicate in their lessons for teaching and learning. Teachers were introduced to new collaborative strategies for teaching and learning that meet the needs of all learners.

2.5 NASCEE

NASCEE in collaboration with the Education, Training and Development SETA (ETDP SETA) offered an opportunity for 14 Not for profit organisations to participate in a digital learning programme offered by SchoolNet SA. This opportunity sought to provide skills and competencies for participants to learn how to design, deliver, assess and support an online course for learners. SchoolNet customised the Technology Enriched Teaching module from the Commonwealth of Learning Certificate for Technology Integration (CCTI) to suit the requirements of the programme and needs of the participants. Thirteen organisations attended and completed the course.

2.6 DGMT

SchoolNet submitted a proposal to the DG Murray Trust for improving our social media presence and improving our website usage statistics. A grant of R 100 000 was accepted and this proved quite timely as the team attended a range of Professional Development seminars to improve our reach via a range of social media platforms.

SchoolNet was able to optimise our Website to be mobile friendly, which showed more than 130% increase in mobile users. We have increased our total users by 87% and impressions have significantly increased which shows that our posts and website is being read by a much wider audience than our followers. Below is a table of statistics that we are measuring on a monthly basis.

	2019 Average/Month	2020 Average/Month	% Differential 2019 & 2020
Total Users	1239.1	2323	87
Returning Users	268.9	473	76
Sessions	1749.3	3254	86
Page Views	4459.4	7984	79
Session length	0.00170	0.00187	10
Bounce rate	0.539	0.699	30
Facebook Followers	2434.5	3121	28
Facebook Reach		13791	100
Twitter Followers	6867.5	6966	1
Twitter Impressions		8159	100
Instagram Followers		485	100
Instagram Reach		523	100
SchoolNet Online/Learn	40.3	113	180
Laptop Users	778.3	1293	66
Mobile Users	421.3	981	133

Tablet Users	40.3	54	33
--------------	------	----	----

2.7 PROTEC

Protec contracted SchoolNet to provide development and support for their staff and tutors involved in the Telkom Connected Schools project. Additionally, we were asked to assist in firming up Protec’s online access to Microsoft Teams and Office 365 to ensure that its academic programmes were accessible via virtual technologies.

In 2021, Protec have once again requested SchoolNet to assist with their digital programmes, however to extend this to their National tutors with the intention of guiding the transition to virtual environments for ongoing academic workshops.

3 Advocacy and New Work/Partnerships

NPI Consulting

SEDA DBE Consultative Meetings (NECT and NASCEE)

NASCEE Membership

DGMT Webinar Series

ACER Partner Workshops

DBE Online Learning Workshop

National Teachers Awards

Microsoft EMEA Events for Women Leaders

Nedbank Innovation Awards

CompTIA webinar series

4 Staff

In 2020, all of the staff were required to attend professional development that provided skills in the use of applications, built competencies in virtual and online workshops and for setting up logistics using virtual platforms for training workshops. This was required in order to consolidate the processes of SchoolNet and to retain as much funding internally rather including external consultants. Mathapelo Sehume and Quintres Sefala have both performed beyond expectations.

The education specialist position remains vacant which has placed a burden on the ED’s time but this is understandable considering that finances does not allow for this position to be filled without confirmed long terms projects.

5. The Short Term Future

Staff development continues to be a huge priority as we need to build capacity in staff to be able to respond to the changing education landscape. This means that our Internal and External processes need to constantly evaluated for effectiveness and efficiencies.

An **Education/ Curriculum Specialist** is required as there are several competing pressures and whilst the ED has coped with the pressures, it is not sustainable. **Finance capacity** is currently being provided by Ian Jusciewicz which is successful, however this too ideally should be an internal resource.

Partnerships stay an important consideration as SchoolNet needs to expand its current base of sponsors and sources of income. We are hopeful that 2021-2022 will provide new partnerships with SETA's and a range of other leads actively being pursued.

New projects continue to be a focus area of the ED in order to provide a more secure financial future for SchoolNet.

Finance Report

**SCHOOLNET SOUTH AFRICA
STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
as at 28 February 2021**

PAGE 1

	Notes	As at 28 February 2021	As at 31 July 2020	As at 29 February 2020
ASSETS		2 862 960	3 954 238	3 234 952
Non current assets		103 804	117 807	97 733
Equipment		103 804	117 807	97 733
Current assets		2 759 157	3 836 431	3 137 219
Investments	1	1 775 349	1 683 597	2 325 149
Accounts receivable	2	257 005	1 093 053	257 570
Accrued commission project income	3	17 182	-	288 168
Cash and cash equivalents	4	709 620	1 059 781	266 332
Total assets		2 862 960	3 954 238	3 234 952
RESERVES AND LIABILITIES		2 862 960	4 245 780	3 234 952
Reserves		2 356 377	3 193 924	2 506 798
Accumulated funds		(502 556)	-	(639 780)
Organisational Development Fund		-	-	-
Sustainability fund		2 364 115	2 655 656	2 655 656
Retrenchment fund		494 818	538 268	490 922
Current liabilities		506 583	1 051 856	728 154
Accounts payable	5	53 907	288 324	55 321
Provision for leave pay		155 006	248 467	210 685
Deferred commissioned project income	6	297 670	515 065	462 149
Total reserves and liabilities		2 862 960	4 245 780	3 234 952